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SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR COMPTROLLER GENERAL,
GAO VISIT TO IRELAND

REF: SECSTATE 49227

¶1. Post welcomes and grants country clearance for Comptroller General David Walker and Donald Drach to travel to Kenmare, Co. Kerry, Ireland from April 10 through April 14, 2006. Purpose of visit is to attend the annual meeting of Auditor's General Global Working Group.

¶2. Embassy Control Officer for this visit is Management Officer Michael Scanlon, office telephone 353 1 668-8777 x2241, home telephone 353 1 218-0990 cell 353 87 223-0106, e-mail scanlonmh@state.gov. Embassy telephone number while in country is (01) 668-8777 during business hours; (01) 668-9612 after hours.

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GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

¶4. Please be advised that there are no visa requirements for visitors traveling to Ireland on diplomatic or official passports.

¶5. Please note that as of March 29, 2004, Ireland has instituted a complete smoking ban in the work place, including all pubs, restaurants, and hotel common areas. Violations of this law may result in a fine of up to Euro 3,000. Check with hotel staff upon arrival to determine if smoking is permitted in hotel room.

¶6. Major credit cards are widely accepted; ATM machines accept most major U.S. bankcards, and offer the best exchange rates.

SECURITY INFORMATION FOR IRELAND

¶7. Post is unaware of direct threats against Americans or U.S. interests in Ireland, and Ireland remains a relatively safe country where anti-American sentiment is rare. For additional threat assessment information regarding Ireland, you may contact DS/DSS/ITA (Diplomatic Security's Office of Intelligence and Threat Assessment) in the State Department at 202-663-0787. TDY visitors staying longer than 30 days should schedule a briefing with the Regional Security Officer.

¶8. Street Crime: Like any large urban center, Dublin has its share of street crime, especially pick-pocketing and purse-snatching. Valuables should not be left unattended in cars and should be kept in hotel safe deposit boxes. Do not carry large amounts of cash. Violent confrontations and use of firearms are rare, however, and with reasonable precautions and common sense visitors should be able to enjoy a safe visit. Police services are excellent; the number for emergency services in Ireland is 999 or 112.

¶9. Terrorism: Ireland, like the rest of the world, shares an increased threat of terrorist incidents of international

origin. Travelers should remain aware of their surroundings and report suspicious people or activities to the police or RSO.

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Visit Dublin's Classified Website:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/dublin/index.cfm>

KENNY